

# THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

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SIR OLIVER LODGE



Immortality eternal  
everlasting

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IN MEMORIAM  
Charles Josselyn.



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THE  
IMMORTALITY  
OF  
THE SOUL





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IMMORTALITY  
OF  
THE SOUL

BY  
SIR OLIVER LODGE

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*In Memoriam  
Charles Gosselyn.*

## PREFACE

*Sir Oliver Lodge, the author of the essay here published, is deservedly honored as a leader in the scientific world. As a physicist he is recognized as an authority by the materialistic school while his services as an active member of the English Society for Psychical Research entitle him to equal honor as a psychologist. Any opinion, therefore, which he may proffer on The Immortality of the Soul must be of interest to all.*

*We believe that the author has never found anything in scientific research that he considered inconsistent with Christian belief, but his present argument is founded*

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*on scientific grounds and not on that of Christian dogma.*

*The substance of this book was first given to the public on October 27th, 1907, as a Drew Lecture in connection with Hackney College. This college was founded in 1803 for the education of Ministers of the Congregational Churches and is now a constituent part of London University. It was first published in The Hibbert Journal for January and April of 1908.*

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# THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

## I. *fleeing* THE TRANSITORY AND THE PERMANENT

"If a man is shut up in a house, the transparency of the windows is an essential condition of his seeing the sky. But it would not be prudent to infer that, if he walked out of the house, he could not see the sky because there was no longer any glass through which he might see it."

DR. M'TAGGART, in his book called *Some Dogmas of Religion*, from which I have taken the excellent apologue prefixed as a sort of motto to this article, says some things with which I am not able wholly to agree. I should like to deal with these at

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greater length in some other connexion, but meanwhile I will quote one of them. In his chapter on Human Immortality he says that an affirmative answer to the question, "Has man an immortal soul?" would be absurd. He wishes to maintain that man *is* a soul rather than that he *has* one; because the possessive case would indicate, he says, that the man himself was his body, or was something that died with the body, and that he owned something, not himself, which at death was set free.

But if we make the correlative

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NOTE: The apologue on the preceding page must not be understood as sustaining what Mr. Haldane derisively calls the "window" theory of the senses, as if they were apertures through which an inner man looked out at an alien universe: a parable must not be pressed unduly.



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statement, and say that "man has a body," surely we are stating an (undeniable truth. And as to what the man himself is—I apprehend that he is a union of soul and body; and that without the one or the other he is incomplete as a man, and becomes something else—a corpse perhaps, a spirit perhaps, or it may be both. But whereas the two were necessarily united during the man's life, death separates them; and the final product, whatever it is, can be described as "man" no longer. Hence the form of the question preferred by Dr. M'Taggart, "Are men immortal?" does not seem to me so appropriate as the more popular and antique form. "Is the soul immortal?" For surely without hesitation everybody must give to his question, about man, the answer: "Not whol-

'Undeniable' means not possible to deny - But in as much as Berkeley denied this - G. E. D.

*e Keen  
erration of  
trained  
perspicist!*

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ly," or "Not every part of him."  
Part of what constitutes human nature is certainly mortal. On one side man undoubtedly belongs to the animal kingdom, and flourishes on this planet, the Earth, by the aid of particles of terrestrial matter which he utilises for that purpose.

By the soul, then, we must mean that part of man which is dissociated from the body at death: that part which is characteristic of a living man as distinct from a corpse. It may be said that it is really more an inter-relation than a part, and that this inter-relation is what is meant by vitality; so that it can be roundly asserted that the apparently disappeared "vitality" is a nonentity or figment of the imagination, and that to speak of it as still existing is like speaking of the "horology" of a

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clock which someone has smashed  
with a hammer.

Very well, admitting that vitality is a mere relation between the body and something else, it is just the nature of this "something else" that we are discussing; and it is no help to start by assuming that this dissociated and perhaps imaginary portion is the man himself, any more than it is helpful to start with the equally gratuitous assumption that the visible and tangible body is the man himself.

The vanished constituent with its attributes may turn out to be more intimately characteristic of, and essential to, the man's real nature and existence, than is the material instrument or organ which has been discarded without having disappeared: they may turn out to have a more

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permanent and therefore a more real existence than the temporary vehicle which served to manifest those attributes and properties during their short tenure of earth life; they may be more especially the seat of his personality and individuality;—but those are just the things which are subject-matter for debate, and they must not be postulated *a priori*.

As a matter of nomenclature, I want to discriminate between the term "vitality" and the term "life"; to use the former as signifying a union or *relation* between the body and something else, and the latter to denote the unknown entity which by interaction with material particles is responsible for their vitality. True, life, thus defined, is a portion or partial aspect of what is often spoken of as "soul," but the term life can be

2) something  
body  
something  
which interacts  
with it - "life"  
2) process  
of interaction  
called vitality

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used by many to whom some of the  
associations of the more comprehen-  
sive term are objectionable.

The first simple and important  
truth that must be insisted on, is the  
commonplace but often ignored and  
even denied fact, that there is noth-  
ing immortal or persistent about the  
material instrument of our present  
senses, except the atoms of which it  
is composed.

Any notion that these same atoms  
will be at some future date re-col-  
lected and united with the dissoci-  
ated and immaterial portion, so as to  
constitute once more the complete  
man as he appeared here on earth,  
who is thereafter to last for ever,—  
any notion of that sort, though most  
unfortunately believed, or at least  
taught, by one great branch of the  
Christian Church, is a (superstition)?

*Alive  
No Christ  
Shame!*

*to be had for*

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not by any means yet really and thoroughly extinct or without influence on sentiment, even in quarters where it may be denied in words. It is too much to expect that it should be so extinct.

Nevertheless, the teaching of natural science is in accordance with the teaching of common sense in this matter. The present body is wholly composed of terrestrial particles; it consists of atoms of matter collected from food and air, and arranged in a certain complicated and characteristic form. The elemental atoms are first combined into the complex aggregate called protoplasm, which is an unstable compound whose chemical constitution is at present unknown, but whose property it is to be always in a state of flux: it is not rigid or stagnant or fixed, but is con-



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stantly breaking down into simpler constituents, on one side, and constantly being renewed or built up, on the other, so that it has a kind of life-history, for a certain period. This period of activity, in any given case, lasts as long as the balance between association and dissociation continues. While the balance is tilting in favour of assimilation, we have the period of youth and growth; when the balance begins to tilt in favour of disintegration, we have the commencement of old age and decay; until at a certain, or rather an uncertain stage, the disintegrating forces gain a final victory, and assimilation wholly and sometimes suddenly ceases. Then presently and by slow degrees the residue of protoplasm left in the body—unless it is speedily incorporated into some other animal

~~Decide, p~~  
~~Is the sta~~  
~~certain~~  
~~uncertain~~  
~~Worse~~

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or plant—is resolved into simpler  
and simpler compounds, and ultimately  
into inorganic constituents;  
and so is restored to mother Earth,  
whence it sprang.

What, then, can be legitimately  
meant by the phrase Resurrection of  
the body? Well, it is highly desirable  
to disentangle the element of truth  
which underlies ancient beliefs  
and is the condition of their durability;  
and, whatever may be the case  
with other forms of religion, it is  
clear that Christianity both by its  
doctrines and its ceremonies rightly  
emphasises the material aspect of  
existence. For it is founded upon the  
idea of Incarnation; and its belief in  
some sort of bodily resurrection is  
based on the idea that every real  
personal existence must have a double  
aspect—not spiritual alone nor phys-



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ical alone, but in some way both.  
Such an opinion, in a refined form,  
is common to many systems of philosophy, and is by no means out of harmony with science.

Christianity, therefore, reasonably supplements the mere survival of a discarnate spirit, a homeless wanderer or melancholy ghost, with the warm and comfortable clothing of something that may legitimately be spoken of as a "body"; that is to say, it postulates a supersensually appreciable vehicle or mode of manifestation, fitted to subserve the needs of future existence as our bodies subserve the needs of terrestrial life: an ethereal or other entity constituting the persistent "other aspect," and fulfilling some of the functions which the atoms of terrestrial matter are constrained to fulfil now. And we

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may assume, as consonant with or  
even as part of Christianity, the doc-  
trine of the dignity and sacramental  
character of some physical or quasi-  
material counterpart of every spirit-  
ual essence.

But though some such connexion  
is essential, any actual instance of it  
may be accidental and temporary.  
Take our present incarnation as an  
example. We display ourselves to  
mankind in the garb of certain  
clothes, artificially constructed of an-  
imal and vegetable materials, and in  
the form of a certain material organ-  
ism, put together by processes of  
digestion and assimilation, and like-

wise composed of terrestrial mate-  
rials. The source of these chemical  
compounds is evidently not impor-  
tant; nor is their special character  
maintained. Whether they formed  
the source  
these Chem  
upso were  
known, -  
not up to  
of (a known?

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part of sheep or birds or fish or plants, they are assimilated and become part of us; being arranged by our subconscious activities and vital processes into appropriate form, just as truly as other materials are consciously woven into garments, no matter what their origin. Moreover, just as our clothes wear out and require darning and patching, so our bodies wear out; the particles are in continual flux, each giving place to others and being constantly discarded and renewed. The identity of the actual or instantaneous body is therefore an affair of no importance: the body which finally dies is no more fully representative of the individual than any of the other bodies which have gradually been discarded *en route*: there is no reason why it should persist any more than they:

\* require  
darning  
patching

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the individuality, if there is one,  
must lie deeper than any particular  
body, and must belong to whatever  
it is which put the particles together  
in this shape and not another.

has about  
a needle  
same?

There is nothing at all similar to  
this automatic decay and replace-  
ment, this preservation of form amid  
diversity of particles, in the mechan-  
ism of a clock. All that its horo-  
logity could mean would be the  
special assemblage or grouping of  
parts which enables it to fulfil cer-  
tain functions, till it wears out, or so  
long as its worn parts are periodic-  
ally replaced by the clockmaker.  
The "vitality" of an organism means  
this and more, for it can replace its  
own worn parts. A clock has noth-  
ing of personal identity, it is not a  
good illustration of a living organ-  
ism. The identity of a river is a

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much closer analogy; and many are the associations which have accordingly gathered round the names "Tiber," "Ganges," "Nile." Rivers have always had attributed to them a kind of poetic personality, though no one can have really supposed them to possess genuine life.

I wish here to make a short digression in order to say that the old and true statement that "everything flows and nothing is stagnant," thus conspicuously exemplified by the material basis of life, need not in the least signify, as it is sometimes taken to signify, that everything is evanescent and nothing is permanent; still less that everything is fanciful and nothing is real. The ancient aphorism of the inspired Heraclitus makes a statement about existence which is vitally and comprehensively true;



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and it is a truth which constitutes the  
keynote of evolution.

To return. The more frankly and  
clearly the truth about the body is  
realised, viz. that the body is a flow-  
ing and constantly changing episode  
in material history, having no more  
identity than has a river, no identity  
whatever in its material constitution,  
but only in its form,—identity only  
in the personal expression or mani-  
festion which is achieved through the  
agency of a fresh and constantly dif-  
fering sequence of material particles,  
—the more frankly all this is rea-  
lised, the better for our understand-  
ing of most of the problems of life  
and being.

The body is the instrument or or-  
gan of the soul: and in its special  
form and aggregation is certainly  
16  
is when the organ dies.

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temporary,—exceedingly temporary,  
for in the most durable cases it lasts  
only about a thousand months—a  
mere instant in the life-history of a  
planet.

But if the body is thus trivial and  
temporary, though while it lasts most  
beautiful and useful and wonderful,  
what is it that puts it together and  
keeps it active and retains it fairly  
constant through all the vicissitudes  
of climate and condition, and  
through all the fluctuations of mate-  
rial constitution?

For remember that we are now not  
dealing with the human body alone.  
All animals have bodies, and so have  
plants. All that has been said, of  
the temporary character of the mate-  
rial aggregate animated by life, ap-  
plies to a vast variety of organisms,

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many of which can be encountered  
on the earth: not to speak of the  
myriads of other worlds.

What causes the very same particles to be incorporated first into the form of a blade of grass, then into the form of a sheep, then into the form of a man; then into the form of some <sup>low - or - low vertebrate, the deer</sup> ~~low~~ invertebrates — "politic worms" (for whose existence, however, in normal cases there is, I believe, no biological authority),—then perhaps into a bird, then once more into vegetation—perhaps a tree? What is it that combines and arranges the particles, so that if absorbed by root or leaves they correspond to and form the tissue of an oak, if picked up by talons, they help to feed the muscles of an eagle, if cooked for dinner, they enter into the nerves and brain of a man? What is

might stop a hole to keep the wind away  
Harrow let  
imperial corner turned to clay



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the controlling entity in each case, which causes each to have its own form and not another, and preserves the form constant amid the wildest diversity of particles?

We call it life, we call it soul, we call it by various names, and we do not know what it is. But common sense rebels against its being "nothing"; nor has any genuine science presumed to declare that it is purely imaginary.

Let us now, therefore, try to define what we mean by "soul," though in our necessary ignorance the task is not easy. The term is indeed so ambiguous that many may think it is better avoided altogether; but the more precise term "mind" is too narrow and exclusive for our present purpose.

The following definition may suf-

Common  
Sense al-  
ready  
rebelled  
against  
the  
notion that  
the earth  
was the center  
of all things  
as the soul of  
Copernicus  
can well  
attest

so/ which  
know/ not

that is  
the Soul  
?

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*in non  
indulgent  
pale? }  
mortality  
artif. prod  
the soul*

sufficiently represent my present meaning:—The soul is that controlling and guiding principle which is responsible for our personal expression and for the construction of the body, under the restrictions of physical condition and ancestry. In its higher development it includes also feeling and intelligence and will, and is the storehouse of <sup>w</sup>mental experience. The body is its instrument or organ, enabling it to receive and to convey physical impressions, and to affect and be affected by matter and energy.

*but it is  
2  
+ then if  
brain is  
used?*

When the body is destroyed, therefore, the soul disappears from physical ken; when the body is impaired, its function is interfered with, and the soul's physical reaction becomes feeble and unsatisfactory. Thus has arisen the popular misconception

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that the soul of a slain person or of a cripple or paralytic has been destroyed or damaged; whereas only its instrument of manifestation need have been affected. The kind of evils which really assault and hurt the soul belong to a different category.

It may be said that, in so far as soul is responsible for bodily shape, soul seems identical with the principle of *life*, and that all living things must possess some rudiment of soul.

Well, for myself, I do not see how to draw a hard and fast distinction between one form of life and another. All are animated by something which does not belong to the realm of physics and chemistry, but lies outside their province, though it interacts with the material entities

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of their realm. Life is not matter,  
nor is it energy, it is a guiding and  
directing principle; and when con-  
sidered as incorporated in a certain  
organism, it, and all that appertains  
to it, may well be called the soul or  
constructive and controlling element  
in that organism.

The soul in this sense is related to  
the organism in somewhat the same  
way as the "Logos" is related to the  
universe; it is that without which it  
does not exist,—that which vivifies  
and constructs, or composes and in-  
forms, the whole.

Moreover, in the higher organ-  
isms, the soul conspicuously has lofty  
potentialities; it not only includes  
what is connoted by the term  
"mind," but it begins to acquire some  
of the character of "spirit"; by  
which means it becomes related to

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the Divine Being. Soul appears to be the link between "spirit" and "matter"; and, according to its grade, it may be chiefly associated with one or with the other of these two great aspects of the universe.

Now let us consider what is meant by Immortality. Is there anything that is not subject to death and annihilation? Can we predicate immortality about anything? Everything is subject to change, but are all things subject to death? Without change there could be no activity, and the universe would be stagnant; but without death it is not so clear that its progress would be obstructed; unless death be only a sort of change.

But is it not a sort of change? Consider some examples:—When a



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piece of coal is burnt and brought to an apparent end, the particles of long-fossilised wood are not destroyed; they enter into the atmosphere as gaseous constituents, and the long-locked-up solar energy is released from its potential form and appears once more as light and heat. The burning of the coal is a kind of resurrection; and yet it is a kind of death too, and to the superficial eye nothing is left but ashes.

Take next the destruction of a picture or a statue, let it be torn to pieces or smashed to powder: there is nothing to suggest resurrection about that, and the beautiful form embodied in the material has disappeared.

Such a dissolution is a more serious matter, and may <sup>or may not</sup> be the result of a really malicious act. It is per-

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haps the nearest approach to genuine destruction that is possible to man, and in some cases represents the material concomitant of a hideous crime. True, nothing material is destroyed, the particles weigh just as much as before; yet the expression is gone, the beauty is defaced, an idea perhaps is lost.

the expression  
is the  
organization

But, after all, the idea was never really in the marble or in the pigments; it was embodied or incarnate or displayed by them, in a sense, but it was not really *there*. It was in the mind of the artist who constructed the work, and it entered the mind of the spectators who beheld it,—at least of those who had the requisite perceptive faculty; but it was never in the stone at all. The inert material, from the impress of mind it had received, was able to



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call out and liberate in a kindred mind some of the original feelings and thoughts which had gone to fashion it. Without a perceptive faculty, without a sympathetic mind, the material was powerless. Set up in, or sent to, a world inhabited only by lower animals, it would convey no message whatever, it would be wholly meaningless; just as a piece of manuscript would be, in such a world, though it contained the divinest poem ever written.

Nevertheless, by the supposed act of vandalism a certain incarnation of beauty has been lost to the world. Though even so it is not destroyed out of the universe: it remains the possession of the artist and of those privileged to feel along with him.

Consider next the destruction of a tree or of an animal. Here again

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the particles remain as many as before, it is only their arrangement that is altered; the matter is conserved but has lost its shape; the energy is constant in quantity but has changed its form. What has disappeared? The thing that has disappeared is the life—the life which appeared to be in the tree or the animal, the life which had composed or constructed it by aid of sunshine and atmosphere, and was manifested by it. Its incarnate form has now gone—no more will that life be displayed amidst its old surroundings, it has disappeared from our ken; apparently it has disappeared from the planet. Has it gone out of existence altogether?

If it were really generated *de novo*, created out of nothing, at the birth of the animal or of the tree,

or—  
organized

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we should be entitled to assume that at death it may have returned to the nonentity whence it came.

But why nonentity? What do we know of nonentity? Is it a reasonable or conceivable idea?

Things when they vanish are only hidden. And so conversely: *you I hear you the first time*

it is readily intelligible that some existence, some bodily presentation, can be evoked out of a hidden or imperceptible or latent or potential existence, and be made actual and perceptible and what we call real. *has about Lord Jesus Christ a atheist*

Instances of that sort are constantly occurring. It occurs when a composer produces a piece of music, it occurs when an artisan constructs a piece of furniture, it occurs when a spider spins a web, and when the atmosphere deposits dew. But what example can we think of where ex-

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istence is created out of nonentity, where nothing turns into something? We can think of plenty of examples of change of organization, of something apparently complex and highly developed arising out of a germ apparently simple; but there must always be at least a seed, or nothing will arise; nothing can come out of nothing: something must always have its origin in something.

A radium atom is an element possessing in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Every now and then it explodes and fires off a portion of itself. This can occur several times in succession, and finally it seems to become inert and to cease to be radium or anything like it; it is thought by some to have become lead, while the particles thrown off have become helium, or occasionally

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neon, or sometimes argon. Let us suppose that. We cannot stop there, we are bound to go on to ask what was the origin of the radium itself. If it explode itself to pieces in the course of a few thousand years, why does any radium still exist? How is it being born? Does it spring into existence out of nothing, or has it some parent? And if it has a parent, what was the origin of that parent?

Never in physical science do we surmise for a moment that something suddenly springs into being from previous non-existence. All that we perceive can be accounted for by changes of aggregation, by assemblage and dispersion. Of material aggregates we can trace the history, as we can trace the history of continents and islands, of suns and



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planets and stars; we can say, or try to say, whence they arose and what they will become; but never do we state that they will vanish into nothingness, nor do we ever conjecture that they arose from nothing.

It is true that in religion we seek to trace things farther back still, and ultimately say that everything arose from God; and there, perforce, our chain of existence, our links of antecedence and sequence must cease. But to allow such a statement to act as an intellectual refuge can only be a concession to human infirmity. Everything truly arose from God; but there is nothing specially illuminating in such a statement as that, for everything is in God now; and everything will continue to be animated and sustained by God to all eternity. It is not legitimate ex-

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plicity to introduce the idea of God  
to explain the past alone; the term  
applies equally to the present and to  
the future.

So the assertion just made, though  
true enough, is only a mode of say-  
ing that what was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be, world  
without end. This is a religious  
mode of expressing our conviction of  
the uniformity of the Eternal Char-  
acter, but it is not a statement which  
adds to our scientific information.  
We may not be able to understand  
Nature, we are certainly unable to  
comprehend God. If we say that  
Nature is an aspect of the Divine  
Being, we must be speaking truly;  
but that only strengthens our present  
argument as to its durability and  
permanence, for we shall certainly  
not thus be led to attribute to any-



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thing so qualified any power of either jumping into or jumping out of existence. To make the statement that Nature is an aspect of the Godhead is explicitly to postulate eternity for every really existing thing, and to say that we call death is not annihilation but only change. Birth is change. Death is change. A happy change, perhaps; a melancholy change, perhaps. That all depends upon circumstances and special cases, and on the point of view from which things are regarded; but, anyhow, an inevitable change.

I want to make the distinct assertion that no really existing thing perishes, but only changes its form.

Physical science teaches us this, clearly enough, concerning matter and energy: the two great entities with which it has to do. And there

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is no likelihood of any great modification in this teaching. It may, perhaps, be induced in the long run to modify the form of statement and to assert conservation and real existence of ether and motion (or, perhaps only, of ether *in* motion) rather than of matter and energy. That is quite possible, but the apparent variation of statement is only a variant in form; its essence and meaning are the same, except that it is now more general and would allow even the atoms of matter themselves to have their day and cease to be; being resolved, perhaps, into electricity, and that into some hitherto unimagined mode of motion of the ether. But all this is far from being accepted at present, and need not here be considered.

The distinction between what is

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transitory and what is permanent is quite clear. Evanescence is to be stated concerning every kind of "system" and aggregation and grouping. A crowd assembles, and then it disperses: it is a crowd no more. A cloud forms in the sky, and soon once more the sky is blue again; the cloud has died. Dew forms on a leaf: a little while, and it has gone again—gone apparently into nothingness, like the cloud. But we know better, both for cloud and dew. In an imperceptible form it was, and soon into an imperceptible form it will again have passed; but meanwhile there is the dewdrop glistening in the sun, reflecting all the movements of the neighbouring world, and contributing its little share to the beauty and the serviceableness of creation.

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Its perceptible or incarnate existence is temporary. As a drop it was born, and as a drop it dies; but as aqueous vapour it persists: an intrinsically imperishable substance, with all the properties persisting which enabled it do condense into drop or cloud. Even it, therefore, has the attribute of immortality.

So, then, what about life? Can that be a nonentity which has built up particles of carbon and hydrogen and oxygen into the form of an oak or an eagle or a man? Is it something which is really nothing; and soon shall it be manifestly the nothing that an ignorant and purblind creature may suppose it to be?

Memory { Not so; nor is it so with intellect  
Intellect { and consciousness and will, nor with  
Love { memory and love and adoration, nor  
all the manifold activities which at

(How to be happy tho.  
married

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present strangely interact with matter and appeal to our bodily senses and terrestrial knowledge; they are not nothing, nor shall they ever vanish into nothingness or cease to be.

They did not arise with us: they never did spring into being; they are as eternal as the Godhead itself, and in the eternal Being they shall endure for ever.

Maintain the  
intellect  
Strengthen  
the will  
Develop the  
Conscience  
Increase the  
memory

"Though earth and man were gone,  
And suns and universes ceased to be,  
And Thou wert left alone,  
Every existence would exist in Thee."

So sang Emily Brontë on her deathbed, in a poem which Mr. Haldane quotes in full, in his Gifford Lectures, as containing true philosophy. And, surely in this respect there is a unity running through the universe, and a kinship between the

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human and the Divine: witness the  
eloquent ejaculation of Carlyle:—

“What, then, is man! What, then, is man!

“He endures but for an hour, and is  
crushed before the moth. Yet in the being  
and in the working of a faithful man is  
there already (as all faith, from the begin-  
ning, gives assurance) a something that per-  
tains not to this wild death-element of Time;  
that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be,  
when Time shall be no more.”



## II

### THE PERMANENCE OF PERSON- ALITY

"After death the soul possesses self-consciousness, otherwise it would be the subject of spiritual death, which has already been disproved. With this self-consciousness necessarily remains personality and the consciousness of personal identity."—KANT, quoted by HEINZE.

IN the part treating of "The Transitory and the Permanent," permanence was claimed for the essence, the intrinsic reality, the *soul* of anything; and transitoriness for its bodily presentment—that is, for all such things as special groupings, arrangements, systems, which are liable to break up into their constituent ele-



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ments, and cease to cohere into a united and organized aggregate. The only real destruction known to us, in fact, in this disintegration or breaking up of an assemblage: things themselves never spring into or out of existence. All we can cause or can observe is variety of *motion*—never creation or annihilation. And even the motion is *transferred* from one body to another, and transformed in the process; it is not generated from nothing, nor can it be destroyed. Special groupings and appearances are transitory; it is their intrinsic and constructive essence which is permanent.

But then, what about personality, individuality, our own character and self? Are these akin to the temporary groupings which shall be dissolved, or are they among the sub-

is applying  
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Soul?

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stantial realities that shall endure?

Let us see how to define the idea of personality or personal and individual character:—A memory, a consciousness, and a will, in so far as they form a consistent harmonious whole, constitute a personality; which thus has relations with the past, the present, and the future. And we shall argue that personality or individuality itself dominates and transcends all temporal modes of expression, and so is essentially eternal wherever it exists.

The life of an insect or a tree may in some sort—must, one would think, in some sort—persist, but surely not its personal character! Why not? Because, presumably, it has none. We can hardly imagine that such a thing has any individuality or personality: it appears to us to be merely

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one of a group, a mere unit in a world of being, without personality of its own. That is what I assume, though I do not dogmatise; nor do I consider it certain, for some of the higher animals. Anyhow we may at once admit that, for all those things which only share in a general life, the temporarily separated portion of that general life will return, undifferentiated and unidentified, to its central store: just as happens in the better-understood categories of matter and energy.

That is simple enough. But suppose that some individual character, some personality, *does* exist. Suppose that not only life, but intellect and emotion and consciousness and will are all associated with a certain physical organism; and suppose that these things have a real and undeni-

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able existence—an existence strengthened and compacted by experience and suffering and joy, till it is no longer only a function of the material aggregate in which for a time it is embodied, but belongs to a universe of spirit closely related to immanent and transcendent Deity; what then? If all that really exists, in the highest sense, is immortal, we have only to ask whether our personality, our character, our self, is sufficiently individual, sufficiently characteristic, sufficiently developed,—in a word, sufficiently *real*; for if it is, there can then be no doubt of its continuance. It may return, indeed, in some sense, to the central store, but not without identity; its individual character will be preserved.

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### *Conservation of Value.*

Professor Höffding of Copenhagen goes further than this. In his book on the Philosophy of Religion he teaches that what he calls the axiom of "the conservation of value" is the fundamental ingredient in all religions—the foundation without which none of them could stand. In his view, as a philosopher, agreeing therein with Browning and other poets, no real Value or Good is ever lost. The whole progress and course of evolution is to increase and intensify the Valuable—that which "avails" or is serviceable for highest purposes,—and it does so by bringing out that which was potential or latent, so as to make it actual and real. Real it was, no doubt, all the time in some sense, as an oak is

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implicit in an acorn or a flower in  
a bud, but in process of time it un-  
folds and adds to the realized Value  
of the universe.

To carry out this idea we might  
define immortality thus:—

Immortality is the persistence of  
the essential and the real: it applies  
to things which the universe has  
gained—things which, once acquired,  
cannot be let go. It is an example  
of the conservation of Value. The  
tendency of evolution is to increase  
the actuality of Value, converting it  
from a potential into an available  
form.

Value may, however, be something  
more than merely constant in quan-  
tity, according to Professor Höff-  
ding. Experience of evolution sug-  
gests that it must increase. Cer-  
tainly it passes from latent to more



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patent forms; and though it sometimes swings back, yet, on the whole, progress seems upward. Is it not legitimate to conjecture that while Matter and Energy neither increase nor decrease, but only change in form; and while life too perhaps is constant in quantity, though alternating into and out of incarnation according as material organisms are put together or worn out; yet that some of the higher attributes of existence,—love, shall we say, joy perhaps, what may be generalised as Good generally, or as availability or Value,—may actually increase: their apparent alternations being really the curves of an upward-tending spiral? It is an optimistic faith, but it is the faith of the poets and seers. Whatever evil days may fall upon an individual or a nation, or even some-



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times on a whole planet, yet the material is subordinate to the spiritual; and if the spiritual persists, it cannot be stationary; it must surely rise in the scale of existence. For evil is that which retards or frustrates development, in any part of the universe subject to its sway, and, accordingly, its kingdom cannot stand: evil contains an essentially suicidal element, so that on the whole the realm of the good must tend to increase, the realm of the bad to diminish.

“No existing universe can tend on the whole towards contraction and decay; because that would foster annihilation, and so any incipient attempt would not have survived; consequently an actually existing and flowing universe must on the whole cherish development, expansion, growth; and so tends towards infinity

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL rather than toward zero. The problem is therefore only a variant of the general problem of existence. Given existence, of a non-stagnant kind, and ultimate development must be its law. Good and evil can be defined in terms of development and decay respectively. This may be regarded as part of a revelation of the nature of God" (*The Substance of Faith*).

From this point of view the law of evolution is that Good shall on the whole increase in the universe with the process of the suns: that immortality itself is a special case of a more general Law, namely, that in the whole universe nothing really finally perishes that is worth keeping, that a thing once attained is not thrown away.

The general mutability and mortality in the world need not perturb

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us. The things we see perishing and dying are not of the same kind as those which we hope to endure. Death and decay, as we know them, are interesting physical processes, which may be studied and understood; they have seized the imagination of man, and govern his emotions, perhaps unduly, but there is nothing in them to suggest ultimate destruction, or the final triumph of ill; they are necessary correlatives to conception and birth into a material world; they do not really contradict an optimistic view of existence.

So far as we can tell, there need be no real waste, no real loss, no annihilation; but everything sufficiently valuable, be it beauty, artistic achievement, knowledge, unselfish affection, may be thought of as enduring henceforth and for ever, if

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not with an individual and personal  
existence, yet as part of the eternal  
Being of God.

*Permanent Element in Man.*

And this carries with it the persistence of personality in all creatures who have risen to the attainment of God-like faculties, such as self-determination and other attributes which suggest kinship with Deity and make their possessor a member of the Divine family. For whether or not this incipient theory of the conservation of value stand the test of criticism, it is undeniable that, as in the quotation from Carlyle at the end of my last article, seers do not hesitate to attribute permanence and timeless existence to the essential element in man himself. They realise that he is one with the

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universe, that he may come to be in tune with the infinite, and that his spasmodic efforts towards a state wherein the average will rise to a level now attained by only the few, are part of the evolutionary travelling of the whole creation. "All omens," says Myers—

"All omens point towards the steady continuance of just such labour as has already taught us all we know. Perhaps, indeed, in this complex of interpenetrating spirits our own effort is no individual, no transitory, thing. That which lies at the root of each of us lies at the root of the Cosmos too. Our struggle is the struggle of the Universe itself; and the very Godhead finds fulfilment through our upward-striving souls" (Myers, *Human Personality*, ii., p. 277).

To return to the problem of individual existence and to a more prosaic atmosphere. What we are

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claiming is no less than this—that,  
whereas it is certain that the present  
body cannot long exist without the  
soul, it is quite possible and indeed  
necessary for the soul to exist with-  
out the present body. We base this  
claim on the soul's manifest tran-  
scendence, on its genuine reality, and  
on the general law of the persistence  
of all real existence. *Of which persistence we know only of the material*

Recognition of the permanent ele-  
ment in man and of the probability  
of his individual survival,—that is  
to say, of the persistence of intelli-  
gence and memory after the destruc-  
tion of the brain—if such recogni-  
tion is to be of the greatest use to  
mankind, should be based on general  
considerations open and familiar to  
all, and be independent of special  
study with results verified by only a  
few. But if general arguments are



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insufficient, and if the reader has patience with a more specific line of investigation, then I submit that the question can also be studied by the aid of observation and experiment, and that a conviction of persistence of personality can be strengthened by the record and discovery of specific facts.

*Expression of Thought in Terms of Motion.*

The brain is definitely the link between the psychical and the physical, which in themselves belong to different orders of being. In the psychical region "thought" is the dominant reality; in the physical, "motion." The bodily organism mysteriously enables one to be translated in terms of the other. Without some connecting mechanism, such

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as that afforded by brain, nerve, and muscle, the things we call intelligence and will, however real, would be incapable of moving the smallest particle of matter. Now, since it is solely by moving matter that we can operate at all in the material world, or can make ourselves known to our fellows,—for in the last resort speech and writing and every action reduce themselves to muscular movement,—and since death inhibits this power, by breaking the link between soul and body, death naturally stops all manifestation, interrupts all intercourse, and so has been superficially thought to be the annihilation of the soul.

But such a conclusion is quite unwarranted. Existence need not make itself conspicuous: things are always difficult to discover when

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they make no impression on the senses: the human race is hardly yet aware, for instance, of the Ether of space; and there may be a multitude of other things towards which it is in the same predicament.

Superficially, nothing is easier than to claim that just as when the brain is damaged the memory fails, so when the brain is destroyed the memory ceases. The reasoning is so plausible and obvious, so within reach of the meanest capacity, that those who use it against adversaries of any but the lowest intelligence might surely assume that it had already occurred to them and exhibited its weak point. The weak point in the argument is its tacit assumption that what is non-manifest is non-existent; that smoothing out the traces of guilt is equivalent to annihilating

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a crime; and that by destroying the mechanism of interaction between the spiritual and the material aspects of existence you must necessarily be destroying one or other of those aspects themselves.

The brain is our present organ of thought. Granted; but it does not follow that brain controls and dominates thought, that inspiration is a physiological process, or that every thinking creature in the universe must possess a brain. Really we know too little about the way the brain thinks, if it can properly be said to think at all, to be able to make any such assertion as that. We terrestrial animals are all as it were one family, and *our* hereditary links with the psychical universe consist of the physiological mechanism called brain and nerve. But these

*Love smashes the organ  
but you don't kill the organist*

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most interesting material structures  
are our servants, not our masters:  
we have to train them to serve our  
purposes; and if one side of the brain  
is injured, the other side may be  
trained to act instead. Destroy cer-  
tain parts of the brain completely,  
however, and connexion between the  
psychic and the material regions is  
for us severed. True; but cutting  
off or damaging communication is  
not the same as destroying or dam-  
aging the communicator: nor is  
smashing an organ equivalent to kill-  
ing the organist. When the Atlan-  
tic cable broke, in 1858, intimate  
communication between England  
and America was destroyed; but that  
fact did not involve the destruction  
of either America or England. It  
appears to be necessary to empha-  
sise this elementary matter, because

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the contrary contention is supposed to cut straight at the root of every kind of general argument for survival hitherto adduced.

But after all, it may be said, the above contention proves nothing either way; granted that breach of communication does not mean destruction of terminal stations, it leaves the question as to their persistence an open one. Yes, it does; it leaves persistence to be sustained by general arguments, such as those of Part I., which were directed to establishing the priority in essence of the spiritual to the material, of idea to bodily presentation; and to be supported by any kind of additional and special experience.



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### *Argument from Telepathy.*

First of all, then, we must ask, are we quite sure that the breach of intercourse is as clear and definite and complete as had been supposed? We have no glimmering conception of the process by which mental activity operates on the matter of the brain; so we cannot be sure that its influence is limited entirely to the brain material belonging to its own special organism. It may conceivably be able to affect other brains too, either directly, or indirectly through an immediate influence on the mind associated with them. Intelligent communication is normally carried on by means of conventional mechanical movements, calculated to set up special aerial or ethereal tremors; which have to be appre-

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hended through sense organs and brain, and interpreted back again into thought. But we are constrained to contemplate the possibility of a more direct method, and to ask, is there ever any direct psychical connexion between mind and mind, irrespective of intermediate physical processes? It is a definite though difficult question, to be answered by experience. And an affirmative answer would suggest, among other things, that though individuality is dependent upon brain for physical manifestation, it may not be dependent on brain for physical existence.

Such independence is difficult to prove directly, in a way convincing to those who approach the subject without previous study, or with prejudices against it; because in the proof, or to produce any recordable

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impression, a bodily organ—such as brain or muscle—*must* be used. We are not, and cannot be, completely independent of the body, in this earth life: but we can bring forward facts which seem to indicate an activity specially and peculiarly psychical, and only slightly physical. Of physical modes of communication between mind and mind there are many varieties: none of which do we really understand, beyond a knowledge of their physical details, though we are well accustomed to them all; but we know of one which appears not to be physical, save at its terminals, and which has the *appearance* of being, in its mode of transmission, exclusively psychical. That is to say, it occurs as if one mind operated directly either on another brain or on another mind

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across a distance (if *distance* has any meaning in such a case) ; or as if one mind exerted its influence on another through the conscious intervention of a third mind acting as messenger ; or as if mental intercourse were effected unconsciously, through a general *nexus* of communication—a universal world-mind. All these hypotheses have been suggested at different times by the phenomenon of telepathy ; and which of them is nearest the truth it is difficult to say. There are some who think that all are true, and that different means are employed at different times.

What we can assert is this, that the facts of “telepathy,” and in a less degree of what is called “clairvoyance,” must be regarded as practically established, in the minds of those who have studied them.

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There may be, indeed there is, still much doubt about the explanation to be attached to those facts; there is uncertainty as to their real meaning, and as to whether the idea half-suggested by the word "telepathy" is completely correct; but the facts themselves are too numerous and well authenticated to be doubted,—even if we except from our survey the directly experimental cases designed to test and bring to book this strange human faculty.

Thus telepathy opens a new chapter in science, and is of an importance that cannot be exaggerated. Even alone, it tends mightily to strengthen the argument for transcendence of mind over body, so that we may reasonably expect the one to be capable of existing independently and of surviving the other; though by itself, or

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in a discarnate condition, it is presumably unable to achieve anything directly on the physical plane. But telepathy is not all. Telepathy is indeed only the first link in a chain: there are further links, further stages on the road to scientific proof.

*Arguments from Præternormal Psychology.*

Have we no facts to go upon, only speculation, concerning the actual persistence of individual memory and consciousness,—of much that characterises a personality—apart from a bodily vehicle? Facts we have; but they are not generally known, nor are they universally accepted: they have still, many of them, to run the gauntlet of scientific criticism even among the few



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students who take the trouble to study them. Their theory has been worked at pertinaciously, but it is still in a rudimentary stage, and by the mass of scientific men the whole subject is at present ignored, because it seems an elusive and disappointing inquiry, and because there are other fields which are easier of cultivation and promise more immediate fertility.

The chief facts to which we can appeal belong to one of three marked regions:—

First, experiences connected with genius, vision, and dream, extending up to premonition and clairvoyance,—the specially *psychological* region.

Second, the singular modification of bodily faculty sometimes expe-

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rienced,—ranging from unusual extension of sensory and muscular powers, such as hyperæsthesia and what is technically known as automatism, up to various grades of what has been described as materialisation;—all which great group of asserted and controverted phenomena may be said to belong to the *physiological* region.

Third, the at first sight disconcerting facts connected with apparent changes, dislocations and disintegrations, of personality—what we may call the *pathological* region.

Concerning all this mass of information, not only is the theory far from distinct, but many of the facts themselves are only sparsely known: they belong to a special branch of study, which, conducted under many

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difficulties, cannot be properly apprehended at second hand.

Suffice it therefore to say, that whereas it is quite clear that *manifestation* of memory and consciousness, in a form capable of being appreciated by or demonstrated to us, is evidently not possible without a material organism or body of some kind, yet—in the judgment of many students of the subject—a surviving memory or personality, even though discarnate, need not be utterly and completely prevented from still occasionally operating in our sphere.

For as it was possible for what in Part I., we defined as “soul” to compose and employ an organ suited to itself, out of various kinds of nutriment, so also it appears to be possible, though not without difficulty and extraordinary trouble, for a dis-

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carnate entity or psychical unit occasionally to utilise a body constructed by some other similar "soul," and to make an attempt at communication and manifestation through that. It has even been conjectured that by special exertion of psychical power a temporary organ of materialisation can be constructed, presumably of organic particles, sufficient to enable some interaction between spirit and matter, and even to display some personal characteristics, through the utilisation of a form partially separate from, though also closely connected with, and as some think even borrowed from, the bodily organism of the auxiliary person known technically as the "medium" of communication, whose presence is certainly necessary. In favour of such an occurrence there is much evi-

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dence, some of it of a weak kind, some of it quite valueless; but again some of it is strong, evidenced by weighing, and vouched for by experienced naturalists and observers such as Dr. A. R. Wallace and Sir W. Crookes, as well as by the eminent physiologist Professor Richet, and by Professors Schiaparelli, Lombroso, and other foreign men of science.

The idea here suggested is admittedly bizarre and at first sight absurd; nevertheless something of the kind has the appearance of being true, in spite of its having been discredited by much professional fraud exercised upon too willing dupes. The phenomenon on which it is based is at any rate a puzzling one, calling for further investigation: which must ultimately pursue it into a region

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quite apart from and beyond the obvious possibilities of fraud; that is to say, must not only establish it as a fact, if it be a fact, but must ascertain the laws which govern it.

*Argument from Automatism.*

More frequently, however, a simpler method, akin to telepathy and to what is commonly known as inspiration or "possession," is employed; whereby some portion of the brain of "the automatist" appears to be operated upon directly, so as to produce intelligible statements, in speech or writing, often of considerable length and occasionally in unknown languages;—these messages being, at least in the cases where they are not merely subjective and of little interest, apparently irrespective of the ordinary consciousness, and



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only slightly sophisticated by the normal mental activity, of the person by whom this organ is usually wielded, and to whom it nominally "belongs."

The body, in fact, or some part of the body, though usually controlled and directed by the particular psychical agent which has composed and grown accustomed to it, can sometimes be found capable of responding to a foreign intelligence, acting either telepathically through the mind or telergically by a more direct process straight on the brain. Sometimes the controlling intelligence belongs to a living person, as in cases of hypnotism; more usually it is an influence emanating from what we must consider some portion of the automatist's own larger or subliminal self. Occasionally a person

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appears able to respond to thoughts or stimuli embedded, as it were, among psycho-physical surroundings in a manner at present ill understood and almost incredible;—as if strong emotions could be unconsciously recorded in matter, so that the deposit shall thereafter affect a sufficiently sensitive organism, and cause similar emotions to reproduce themselves in its subconsciousness, in a manner analogous to the customary conscious interpretation of photographic or phonographic records, and indeed of pictures or music and artistic embodiment generally. And lastly, there are people who seem able to respond to a psychical agency apparently related to the surviving portion of intelligences now discarnate, in such a way as to suggest that the said intelligences are

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picking up the thread of their old thoughts, and entering into something like their old surroundings and their old feelings—though often only in a more or less dreamy and semi-entranced condition—for the purpose of conveying hallucinatory or other impressions to those who are still in the completely embodied state.

It would be a great mistake to assume, without proof, that any given automatic message really emanates from the person to whom it is attributed; and such a generalisation applied to all so-called messages would be grotesquely untrue. But then neither should we be safe in maintaining that none of them have an authentic character, and that they are never in any degree what they purport to be. The elimination of

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the normal personality of the automatist, and the proof of the supposed communicator's identity, are singularly difficult; but in a few cases the evidence for identity is remarkably strong. The substance of the message and the kind of memory displayed in these cases belong not at all to the brain of the automatist, but clearly to the intelligence of the asserted control: of whose identity and special knowledge they are sometimes strongly characteristic. As to the elimination of normal personality, however, it must be admitted that, in all cases, the manner and accidents or accessories of the message are liable to be modified by the material instrument or organ through which the thought or idea is for our information reproduced. The reproduction of a thought in

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our world appears to demand distinct effort on the part of a transcendental thinker, and it seems to be almost a matter of indifference, or so to speak of accident not determined by the thinker, whether it make its appearance here in the form of speech or of writing, or whether it take the form of a work of art, or of unusual spiritual illumination. This is surely true of orthodox inspiration, as well as of what we are now conjecturing may perhaps be an attempt at some additional method of arousing ideas in us. Moreover, in both cases, lucidity is only to be expected, and is only obtained, in flashes. The best of us only get flashes of genius now and then, and the experience is seldom unduly prolonged. Why should we expect it to be otherwise?

There is another aspect of the mat-

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ter that may be mentioned too. For most of the difficulty of inter-communication we ourselves must be held responsible. ( Our normal immersion in mundane affairs may be very sensible and practical, and is probably essential to earthly progress until our civilisation is rather more consolidated and developed, but it can hardly facilitate communion with another order of existence.) Nor is it likely that we should be able to appreciate the intimate concerns of that other order, even if it were feasible to convey a detailed account of them.

It is true that messages are often vague and disappointing even when apparently genuine; untrue that they are invariably futile and useless and inappropriate,—such an assertion could only be made by people im-



THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL perfectly acquainted with the facts. In certain cases it is quite clear that a bodily organism has been controlled by something other than its usual and normal intelligence, and in a few cases the identity of the control has been almost crucially established: though that is a matter to be dealt with more technically elsewhere.

### *Subliminal Faculty.*

The extension of faculty exhibited during some trance states has suggested that a similar enlargement of memory and consciousness may follow or accompany our departure from this life, and is partly responsible for the notion of the existence of a subliminal or normally unconscious portion of our total personality. On this subject I can conven-

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iently refer to the summary contained in Myers's chapters on "Disintegration of Personality" and on "Genius," in vol. i. of his *Human Personality*. This doctrine—the theory of a larger and permanent personality of which the conscious self is only a fraction in process of individualisation, the fraction being greater or less according to the magnitude of the individual,—this doctrine as a working hypothesis, illuminates many obscure facts, and serves as a thread through an otherwise bewildering labyrinth. It removes a number of elementary stumbling-blocks which otherwise obstruct an attempt to realise vividly the incipient stages of personal existence; it accounts for the extraordinary rapidity with which the development of an individual proceeds;

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and it eases the theory of ordinary birth and death. It achieves all this as well as the office for which it was originally designed, viz. the elucidation of unusual experiences, such as those associated with dreams, premonitions, and prodigies of genius. Many great and universally recognised thinkers, Plato, Virgil, Kant, I think,<sup>1</sup> and Wordsworth, all had room for an idea more or less of this kind; which indeed. in some form, is almost necessitated by a consideration of our habitually unconscious performance of organic function.

<sup>1</sup> In justification of the inclusion of this name, the following may suffice as an example:—"For if we should see things and ourselves as they are, we would see ourselves in a world of spiritual natures with which our entire real relation neither began at birth nor ended with the body's death."—KANT, quoted by HEINZE.

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Whatever it is that controls our physiological mechanism, it is certainly not our own consciousness; nor is it any part of our recognised and obvious personality.

“We feel that we are greater than we know.”

Our present state may be likened to that of the hulls of ships submerged in a dim ocean among many strange beasts, propelled in a blind manner through space; proud perhaps of accumulating many barnacles as decoration; only recognising our destination by bumping against the dock wall. With no cognisance of the deck and the cabins, the spars and the sails; no thought of the sextant and the compass and the captain; no perception of the lookout on the mast, of the distant horizon; no vision of objects

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far ahead, dangers to be avoided,  
destinations to be reached, other  
ships to be spoken with by other  
means than bodily contact;—a re-  
gion of sunshine and cloud, of space,  
of perception, and of intelligence,  
utterly inaccessible to the parts be-  
low the water-line.

To suppose that we know and un-  
derstand the universe, to suppose  
that we have grasped its main out-  
lines, that we realise pretty com-  
pletely not only what is in it, but  
the still more stupendous problem  
of what is not and cannot be in it—  
as do some of our gnostic (self-  
styled “agnostic”) friends—is a pre-  
sumptuous exercise of limited intelli-  
gence, only possible to a certain very  
practical and useful order of brain,  
which has good solid work of a com-  
monplace kind to do in the world,

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and has been restricted in its outlook,  
let us say by Providence, in order  
that it may do that one thing and do  
it well.

And just as we fail to grasp the  
universe, so do we fail as yet to know  
ourselves: the part of which we have  
become aware, the part which man-  
ifestly governs our planetary life, is  
probably far from being the whole.<sup>1</sup>  
The assumption that the true self is  
complex, and that a large range of

<sup>1</sup> Such an admission is quite consistent with  
recognition of the momentous character of  
this present stage of existence, not only while  
it lasts, but as influencing, and contributing  
in every sense to, the future; the doctrine of  
the subliminal self throws no sort of contempt  
or discouragement on the things which really  
ought to interest us here and now. There  
is "danger of losing sight of the ideal in our  
immediate life, and thinking that is to be  
found only in the past or in the future," says



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memory may ultimately be attained, is justified by the researches of alienists, and mental physicians generally, into those curious pathological cases of "strata of memory" or dislocations of personality, on which many medical books and papers are available for the student. In cases of multiple personality, the patients, when in the ordinary or normally conscious state, are usually ignorant of what has happened in the intervening periods when they were not in that state, and are not aware of what they have done when in one of the deeper states; but as soon as the

Professor Caird; whereas our little struggle is part of the great conflict of good and evil in the universe, and we should be encouraged were we to "realise that our life is not an aimless or meaningless vicissitude of events, but an essential step in the great process."

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personality has entered an ultra-normal condition, it is often found to be aware, not only of its previous actions when in that condition, but also of what was felt and known while at the ordinary grade of intelligence.

The analogy pointed to is that whereas we living men and women, while associated with this mortal organism, are ignorant of whatever experience our larger selves may have gone through in the past—yet when we wake out of this present materialised condition, and enter the region of larger consciousness, we may gradually realise in what a curious though legitimate condition of ignorance we now are; and may become aware of our fuller possession, with all that has happened here and now fully remembered and in-

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corporated as an additional experience into the wide range of knowledge which that larger entity must have accumulated since its intelligence and memory began. The transition called death may thus be an awaking rather than a sleeping; it may be that we, still involved in mortal coil, are in the more dream-like and unreal condition:—

“Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—

He hath awakened from the dream of life—

’Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep  
With phantoms an unprofitable strife.”

(Shelley’s *Adonais*.)

The ideas thus briefly indicated have been suggested by a mass of unfamiliar experience, upon which it is legitimate to speculate, though quite illegitimate to dogmatise; but

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in case they seem too fanciful to serve  
as any part of a basis for human im-  
mortality, it may be well to show  
how clearly the possibility of a  
larger and fuller existence than the  
present is indicated by facts with  
which we are all familiar.

*Argument from Genius.*

It must be apparent how few of  
our faculties can really be accounted  
for by the need of sustenance and by  
the struggle for existence; and how  
those necessary faculties and powers  
naturally assume an overweening  
importance here and now, from the  
fact that they are so specially fitted  
to our present surroundings. So  
that the less immediately practical  
mental and spiritual characteristics  
can be spoken of by anthropologists  
as if they were of the nature of sports

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and by-products, not in the direct  
line of evolutionary advance.

But, says Myers:—

“The faculties which befit the material environment have absolutely no primacy, unless it be of the merely chronological kind, over those faculties which science has often called *by-products*, because they have no manifest tendency to aid their possessor in the struggle for existence in a material world. The higher gifts of genius—poetry, the plastic arts, music, philosophy, pure mathematics—all of these are precisely as much in the central stream of evolution—are perceptions of new truth and powers of new action just as decisively predestined for the race of man—as the aboriginal Australian’s faculty for throwing a boomerang or for swarming up a tree for grubs. There is, then, about those loftier interests nothing exotic, nothing accidental; they are an intrinsic part of that ever-evolving response to our surroundings which forms not only the planetary but the cosmic history of all our race.”

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We can regard these higher faculties, these inspirations of genius and the like, not only as contributing to our best moments now, but as forecasts or indications of something still more specially appropriate to our surroundings in the future—anticipations of worlds not realised—rudiments of what will develop more fully hereafter; so that their apparent incongruousness and occasional inconvenience, under present mundane conditions, are quite natural. Ultimately they may be found to be nearer to the heart of things than the attributes which are successful in the stage to which this world has at present attained; though they can only exhibit their full meaning and attain their full development in a higher condition of existence,—whether that be found by the race



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on this planet or by the individual  
in a life to come.

“An often-quoted analogy has here a closer application than is commonly apprehended. The grub comes from the egg laid by a winged insect, and a winged insect it must itself become; but meantime it must for the sake of its own nurture and preservation acquire certain larval characters—characters sometimes so complex that the observer may be excused for mistaking that larva for a perfect insect destined for no further change save death. Such larval characters, acquired to meet the risks of a temporary environment, I seem to see in man’s earthly strength and glory. In these I see the human analogues of the poisonous tufts which choke the captor—the attitudes of mimicry which suggest an absent sting—the ‘death’s head’ coloration which disconcerts a stronger foe.”

For the triumphs of natural selection, then, we must look not to the spiritual faculties and endowments

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of the race, but to the business-like  
masterfulness which makes one man  
a conqueror and another man a mil-  
lionaire. These we can regard as  
larval characters, of special service  
in the present stage of existence, but  
destined to be discarded, or modi-  
fied almost out of recognition, in  
proportion as a higher state is at-  
tained. This I take to be the deep  
meaning of the Gospel sentence be-  
ginning "How hardly!"

But to continue Myers's biolog-  
ical parable:—

"Meantime the adaptation to aerial life is  
going on; something of the imago or perfect  
insect is performed within the grub; and in  
some species, even before they sink into their  
transitorial slumber, the rudiments of wings  
still helpless protrude awkwardly beneath the  
larval skin. Those who call Shelley, for in-  
stance, 'a beautiful but ineffectual angel beat-  
ing his wings in the void,' may adopt if they

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choose, this homelier but exacter parallel. Shelley's special gifts were no more by-products of Shelley's digestive system than the wings are by-products of the grub" (Myers, i., p. 97).

The meaning, you see, is that they *are* in the direct line of evolution, when the whole of existence is taken into account; and that similarly in the evolution of genius we are watching the emergence of unguessed potentialities from the primal germ,—the first revealings

"Of faculties, displayed in vain, but born  
To prosper in some better sphere."

(Browning's *Paracelsus*.)

Moreover, what is true for the individual must be true also in some measure for the race. Embryology teaches us that each organism rapidly recapitulates or epitomises, amid how different conditions, its ances-

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tral past history. It is legitimate to extend the same idea to the future, and to regard the progress of the individual and the progress of the race as in some degree concurrent; since their potentialities are similar, though their surroundings will be different. This argument, so far as I know, is novel, but not undeserving of attention.

*Argument from Mental Pathology.*

And as to the disintegrations of personality,—the painful defects of will, the lapses of memory, the losses of sensation—such as are manifested by the hysteric patients of the Salpêtrière and other hospitals,—the lesson to be learnt from those pathological cases is not one of despair at the weakness and ghastly imperfections possible to humanity; rather,

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on this view, it is one of hope and inspiration. For they point to the possibility that our present condition may be as much below an attainable standard as the condition of these poor patients is below what by a natural convention we have agreed to regard as the "normal" state. We might indeed feel bound to regard it not only as normal but as ultimate, were it not that some specimens of our race have already transcended it, have shown that genius, almost superhuman, is possible to man, and have thereby foreshadowed the existence of a larger personality for us all. Nay, they have done more,—for in thus realising in the flesh some of the less accessible of human attributes, they have become the first-fruits of a brotherhood higher than the human; we may hail them as

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the forerunners of a nobler race. Such a race, I venture to predict, will yet come into existence, not only in the vista of what may seem to some of us an unattractive and unsubstantial future, but here in the sunshine on this planet Earth.

“Prognostics told  
Man’s near approach; so in man’s self arise  
August anticipations, symbols, types  
Of a dim splendour ever on before.”

For as the hysteric stands in comparison with us ordinary men, so perhaps do we ordinary men stand in comparison with a not impossible ideal of faculty and of self-control. “Might not,” says Myers,

“Might not all the historic tale be told, *mutato nomine*, of the whole race of mortal men? What assurance have we that from some point of higher vision we men are not as these shrunken and shadowed souls? Sup-



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pose that we had all been a community of hysterics, all of us together subject to these shifting losses of sensation, these inexplicable gaps of memory, these sudden defects and paralyses of movement and of will. Assuredly we should soon have argued that our actual powers were all with which the human organism was or could be endowed. . . . Nay, if we had been a populace of hysterics we should have acquiesced in our hysteria. We should have pushed aside as a fantastic enthusiast the fellow-sufferer who strove to tell us that this was not all that we were meant to be. As we now stand,—each one of us *totus, teres, atque rotundus* in his own esteem,—we see at least how cowardly would have been that contentment, how vast the ignored possibilities, the forgotten hope. Yet who assures us that even here and now we have developed into the full height and scope of our being? A moment comes when the most beclouded of these hysterics has a glimpse of the truth. A moment comes when, after a profound slumber, she wakes into an *instant clair*—a flash of full perception, which shows her as solid, vivid realities all that she has

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in her bewilderment been apprehending phantasmally as a dream. . . . Is there for us also any possibility of a like resurrection into reality and day? Is there for us any sleep so deep that waking from it after the likeness of perfect man we shall be satisfied; and shall see face to face; and shall know even as also we are known?"

Whatever may be the answer to this question, it is undoubtedly true now—and that it is true is largely owing to him and his co-workers—that "these disturbances of personality are no longer for us—as they were even for the last generation—mere empty marvels, which the old-fashioned sceptic would often plume himself on refusing to believe. On the contrary, they are beginning to be recognised as psycho-pathological problems of the utmost interest;—no one of them exactly like another, and no one of them without some

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possible *aperçu* into the intimate  
structure of man.”

*Religious Objections.*

Whatever objections to the above argument may be adduced from the side of science—and there are sure to be many, for free criticism is its natural atmosphere,—there is one from the side of religion—more often felt than expressed perhaps—which I must in conclusion briefly notice:—

Objection is sometimes taken against any attempt being made gradually to arrive at what in process of time may come to be regarded as a scientific proof of such a thing as immortality; on the ground that it is an encroachment on the region of faith, a presumptuous interference with what ought to be treated as the territory of religion alone.

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To meet these objectors on their own ground, they might be reminded of such texts as 2 Pet. i. 5, Prov. xxv. 2, as well as of the still more authoritative encouragement to investigation contained in Luke xi. 9 and in 1 John i. 5; the latter, or indeed both, being an expression of the basal postulate of the man of science, namely, the ultimate intelligibility of the Universe.

But, after all, an objection of this kind can only be felt, first by those who think that knowledge is the enemy of belief, instead of its strengthener and supporter, and second by those who unconsciously fear that the domain of religion is finite, and who therefore resent encroachments as diminishing its already too restricted area. It cannot be felt by people who realise that the domin-

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ion of religion is unlimited, and that there is infinite scope for faith, however far knowledge—real and accurate scientific knowledge—extends its boundaries. The enlargement of those boundaries is all gain; for thus the one area is increased while the other is not diminished. Infinity cannot be diminished by subtraction. No such objection to the spread of knowledge was felt by that inspired writer who hoped for the time when “the earth shall be full of the *knowledge* of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

Whatever science *can* establish, that it has a right to establish: more than a right, it has a duty. Whatever science can examine into, that it has a right to examine into. If there be things which we are not intended to know, be assured that we

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shall never know them: we shall not know enough about them even to ask a question or start an inquiry.

The intention of the universe is not going to be frustrated by the insignificant efforts of its own creatures. If we refrain from examination and inquiry, for no better reason than the fanciful notion that perhaps we may be trespassing on forbidden ground, such hesitation argues a pitiful lack of faith in the good-will and friendliness and power of the forces that make for righteousness.

Let us study all the facts that are open to us, with a trusting and an open mind; with care and candour testing all our provisional hypotheses, and with slow and cautious verification making good our steps as we proceed. Thus may we hope to reach out further and ever further



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into the unknown; sure that as we grope in the darkness we shall encounter no clammy horror, but shall receive an assistance and sympathy which it is legitimate to symbolise as a clasp from the hand of Christ himself.





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